



Wright-Dunbar Heritage News

Park Requests Your Input for Our General Management Plan Amendment

What Is a General Management Plan, and Why Does It Need to Be Amended?

The general management plan is the basic guidance document for decision-making at a national park. It defines the park's mission and goals, defines desired future conditions, and establishes activities that are appropriate within various areas of the park. All other plans, such as strategic plans, resource management plans, and annual plans, implement the details needed to achieve the goals established in the general management plan. Usually, the planning lifetime for a general management plan is 15 to 20 years.

The general management plan for Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park was

Dear Friend,

The National Park Service is currently preparing an amendment to the general management plan for Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park in Dayton, Ohio. An environmental impact statement also will be prepared during the planning process. The environmental impact statement will evaluate the effects the candidate management alternatives would have on the natural and human environment.

An important part of the planning and environmental impact statement process is understanding the interests and priorities of the public. This process is called public participation. Therefore, your input on issues and concerns regarding park management is needed.

This newsletter is devoted to explaining the upcoming general management plan amendment. It provides background information on the park and describes the issues that have been identified to date. It also outlines future activities and describes how you can participate in the planning process.

As the superintendent of Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park, I invite you to participate in this important planning process for our park.

Sincerely,

Lawrence Blake, Superintendent

completed in 1997. Most aspects of the plan still are valid and will remain in effect. However, several changes have occurred that were not foreseen when planning was occurring in the mid-1990s. The intent of the general

management plan amendment process will be to evaluate changes and determine how best to incorporate them into the overall plan for park management.

How Is the Park Currently Managed?

There are two purposes of Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park, as defined in the existing general management plan. They are that the park:

- Serves as a focal point for information on the Wright brothers, who invented powered flight and were major leaders in the early development of aviation.
- Relates the story of renowned poet and author, Paul Laurence Dunbar, who won international acclaim as a writer. Dunbar became an effective voice for equality and justice, and contributed to the growing social

consciousness and cultural identity of African-Americans.

A key goal of the park in meeting these purposes is to be an integral part of the community so that its presence brings improvements to the community. It also must work cooperatively with its legislated partners and others for management, interpretation, transportation, research, stewardship, and facility development for sites both within and outside of the park boundaries.

Most people think of national parks as large blocks of lands with distinct boundaries, such as Yellowstone or Grand Canyon. However, the

urban Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park consists of four units located several miles apart. They are:

- The Wright Cycle Company Complex, which currently includes The Wright Cycle Company building, the Wright-Dunbar Interpretive Center, and the Aviation Trail Visitor Center;
- The Paul Laurence Dunbar State Memorial;
- The John W. Berry, Sr., Wright Brothers Aviation Center complex at Carillon Historical Park; and



The location of Huffman Prairie Flying Field within the secure area at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base presents challenges in providing visitor access.

- Huffman Prairie Flying Field, which is within the secure area at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base.

In managing the park, the National Park Service has four legislatively mandated partners. They include

- Wright-Patterson Air Force Base;
- The Ohio Historical Society;
- Carillon Historical Park, Inc.; and
- Aviation Trail, Inc.

The National Park Service also works with a federal commission (the Dayton Aviation Heritage Commission), numerous government agencies, and more than 40 partner organizations.

What Has Changed?

When the 1997 general management plan was prepared, the Huffman Prairie Flying Field Interpretive Center did not exist. However, under an agreement between the U.S. Air Force and the National Park Service, this facility recently was constructed at the top of Wright Brothers Hill near the Wright Memorial. The general management plan amendment process is needed to investigate the best management approach for the lands surrounding the interpretive center. This could include incorporating the entire Wright Memorial site within the official boundaries of the park. The amendment also is needed to evaluate transportation alternatives to move visitors using motorized vehicles from the interpretive center to Huffman Prairie Flying Field. In addition, an amendment to the general management plan could reinforce the existing agreement that defines each party's responsibilities in operating the interpretive center.

Security at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base has increased since the attacks on September 11, 2001. The general management plan amendment process is needed to evaluate the best way to accommodate the security needs of the U.S. Air Force while allowing public access to Huffman Prairie Flying Field.



Through a partnership, the visitor center for the Huffman Prairie Flying Field unit has been built on U.S. Air Force land at the Wright Memorial.

Several opportunities have been identified since 1997 that could improve interpretation or optimize the management of park resources. The National Park Service would take advantage of the planning process that was prompted by the

preceding two items to evaluate these other opportunities and determine if they should be incorporated into the park's general management plan. These opportunities are identified below in the discussion of issues.

What Are the Issues that Will Be Addressed in the General Management Plan Amendment?

Huffman Prairie Flying Field. The issue at this site is whether some of the lands surrounding Huffman Prairie Flying Field should be included within the national park. This park unit is about 85 acres in size, and includes only those lands that were located within the historic flying field used by the Wright brothers. It may be beneficial to expand the boundaries of the park at this site to facilitate management and improve access and interpretation. Expansion or modification of the existing boundaries would require amendment of the park's authorizing legislation by Congress.

Huffman Prairie Flying Field currently is within a secure area of Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. The general management plan amendment will consider alternatives for providing motorized vehicle access to Huffman Prairie Flying Field and for linking the interpretive center at the Wright Memorial with the flying field site. Alternatives could range from no additional action to constructing any one of six proposed configurations for the "Gateway Project," which could include a bridge across State Route 444 and Kauffman Avenue.

Wright Memorial. Issues at this site include property ownership and facility management and operations. The 27-acre Wright Memorial is on Wright-Patterson Air Force Base and is not within the park's current boundaries. Possible boundary change options in this area could include, but may not be limited to, expanding the park to include the entire Wright Memorial site, expanding the park to include only the visitor center area, and



The Wright Memorial, dedicated on August 19, 1940, will be considered for inclusion in Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park.



The general management plan amendment will consider whether designation of the Dunbar House as a separate National Historic Site will increase visitor recognition and appreciation of Paul Laurence Dunbar's accomplishments.

expanding the park to include additional lands outside of the Wright Memorial in the vicinity of the southwest end of the proposed Gateway Project. Expansion or modification of the existing boundaries would require amendment of the park's authorizing legislation by Congress. Operational issues would focus on the long-term responsibilities of the National Park Service and the U.S. Air Force in maintaining the site and providing interpretation.

Paul Laurence Dunbar State Memorial. At issue is whether this site should receive designation as a separate national historic site or remain a part of the largely aviation-focused park. The planning process will investigate the most appropriate designation to convey the Dunbar story. Although Dunbar was a friend of the Wright brothers and a classmate of Orville Wright, he had little connection with the development of aviation in Dayton. Moreover, the park's ability to present Dunbar's importance as the first African-American to gain widespread recognition for his literary accomplishment may be obscured by the aviation theme of the remainder of the park.

The National Park Service is committed to ensuring the protection, preservation, and interpretation of Paul Laurence Dunbar's home as a unit of the national park system and is interested in determining the designation that will most effectively assist the National Park Service, in partnership with the Ohio Historical Society, in achieving that objective. Options could include continuing the site's current status as a part of the park, or designating a separate Paul Laurence Dunbar National Historic Site. In the latter case, the general management plan amendment process will determine if the site should be administered in conjunction with or separately from the aviation park. Any change in designation would require amendment of the park's authorizing legislation by Congress.

The Ohio Historical Society has ownership of, and full responsibility for, the management and operation of the Paul Laurence Dunbar State Memorial. The Ohio Historical Society is fully committed to maintaining its active ownership and management roles as other designations for the Dunbar site are considered.

Wright Cycle Company Complex. Issues in this unit relate to possible boundary expansion and optimal management of resources. The two historic houses adjacent to The Wright Cycle Company building (26 and 30 South Williams Street) are owned by the City of Dayton. The city commission has voted to donate these properties to the park and the park is now working with the city to complete the legal transfer. The red house (30 South Williams Street) has been rehabilitated and, as an interim use, is serving as the park headquarters.

The planning process will determine whether the cream-colored structure (26 South Williams Street) should be rehabilitated or restored. It also will consider the most appropriate uses of both houses after operational activities, including current administrative functions, move to the Wright-Dunbar Interpretive Center.

Operations would be improved if a storage and maintenance facility were available near the Wright-Dunbar Interpretive Center. The planning process will consider alternatives for meeting this need. It will also consider whether any of several other proposals for purchasing or transferring properties for National Park Service use in this area are appropriate. Any expansion or modification of the existing boundaries would require amendment of the park's authorizing legislation by Congress.



The general management plan amendment will consider alternatives for managing the historic houses adjacent to The Wright Cycle Company building in west Dayton.

Park Staffing, Responsibility, and Functions.

The National Park Service has multiple partners in the ownership and operation of Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park. The general management plan amendment process will evaluate alternatives for:

- Responsibilities and functions, potentially including staffing issues, with Wright-Patterson Air Force Base (U.S. Air Force),

Ohio Historical Society, Carillon Historical Park, Inc., and Aviation Trail, Inc.; and

- Ensuring security at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base.

After these relationships are established, they will be included in the general management plan amendment to ensure long-term continuity in park management.

What Are the Alternatives for Managing the Park?

We do not know yet. One of the values of the public participation process is to help us define the alternatives that will be considered in the general management plan amendment process.

After we receive public input, we will meet with our partners in early December to formulate the alternatives. They will include an alternative to continue current management (the no action alternative), and action alternatives (alternatives

that represent a change from current conditions). Each of the action alternatives will be able to meet all of the management goals of Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park.

The Planning Process and Where We Are

The table on the next page briefly summarizes the general management plan amendment process and your opportunities to participate. As you can see, we are just starting the planning process.

You are invited to attend the public scoping meeting at the Engineers Club, 110 E. Monument Avenue, Dayton, Ohio, on December 4, 2002, from 6 to 8 p.m. If you do not attend the meeting, but want to contribute to scoping, you can send us written comments by January 6, 2003.

Alternatives will be developed in early December, based on scoping. After the alternatives are defined, we will prepare the general management plan amendment and environmental impact statement. If you are on our mailing list, you will receive a park newsletter that describes the alternatives that are being evaluated.

A third newsletter toward the end of the evaluation process will discuss the progress to date, and will identify when the draft general

management plan amendment and environmental impact statement will be available for public review. It also will present options on how to review the document, such as in print form, as a compact disk, or as a summary. Currently, we anticipate release of the draft plan amendment and environmental impact statement during the summer of 2004.

	Planning Activity	Public Involvement Opportunity
We are here	Initiate project	Read this newsletter and join the mailing list.
	Scoping	Attend the public meeting on December 4, 2002 or comment on the response form, via letter, or via e-mail.
	Develop and evaluate alternatives	Read the alternatives newsletter.
	Prepare and publish the draft general management plan amendment and environmental impact statement	Read the draft plan and send us your comments.
	Prepare and publish the final document	Read the final plan.
	Implement the plan	

How to Participate in Scoping

If you are already on our mailing list, you do not need to do anything to maintain your active status – you will receive all project updates. However, we encourage you to contribute to scoping.

If you want to participate in scoping and/or join our mailing list, you can let us know by any one of several methods. **We need to receive your comments on or before January 6, 2003.**

- You can attend the December 4, 2002 scoping meeting, where you can provide us with oral or written comments.
- You can use the form that is included in this newsletter to join the mailing list, to identify the issues or concerns that you think should be addressed, and/or to identify alternatives

that you would like to see considered.

- You can send us a letter at: Superintendent, Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park, P.O. Box 9280, Wright Brothers Station, Dayton, OH 45409.
- You can send us an e-mail at: daav_gmpa@nps.gov.
- You can hand-deliver written comments to 30 South Williams Street, Dayton, Ohio.

Regardless of how you comment, please include your name and mailing address.

Our practice is to make comments, including names and home addresses of respondents,

available for public review during regular business hours. Individual respondents may request that we withhold their home address from the record, which we will honor to the extent allowable by law. There also may be circumstances in which we would withhold from the record a respondent's identity, as allowable by law. If you wish us to withhold your name and/or address, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comment. We will make all submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, available for public inspection in their entirety.

Mark Your Calendar with These Dates:

December 4, 2002 – Public scoping meeting at the Engineers Club, 110 E. Monument Avenue, Dayton, Ohio

January 6, 2003 – Written scoping comments are due at park headquarters



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EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA



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The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park commemorates the legacy of three exceptional men – Wilbur Wright, Orville Wright, and Paul Laurence Dunbar – and their lives and works in the Miami Valley. It recognizes the national significance of the contributions made by these three individuals and the city of Dayton's role in their contributions. It promotes the preservation and interpretation of resources related to the lives of these three men and the invention of flight through a management framework based on cooperation among diverse groups that share an interest in aviation history and Paul Laurence Dunbar.

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